

Obsolete Ships

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Not long ago, I was in Mayport for a friend's Change of Command and retirement ceremony. I took advantage of the opportunity to ride by the waterfront and look at the ships. I am amazed that the profiles of the ships have changed while I have been on active duty.

When I joined the Navy, *Spruance* class Destroyers were the latest in technology. Now, they have been decommissioned and replaced in the fleet by a new class of ship, the *Arleigh Burke* class Destroyer. Technology changed and it was no longer cost effective to update the older ships.

I knew a man when I was a small boy who had served on a very unique ship during World War I. When the ship was built, it was the USS Alabama and had been constructed over a 47-year period, from 1817 until 1864. It was already obsolete by the time it was launched, as steam powered ships were now coming into use. By the time he served on this ship, it had been renamed twice and was then called the USS Granite State. It had been stripped of its masts and had been permanently anchored in the Hudson River where administrative offices onboard directing all harbor activity.

As we see technology develop and force the change in our warfighting equipment, we are soon left with items that are only suitable for museum pieces or collectibles. However, there are some things in life that remain constant. These are standards. They do not change over time. They are the benchmarks that we use to compare all else.

The interesting thing about standards is that they do not change, while morals and attitudes might. Morals are from the same root word as *mores*. These are changeable values that determine what is right or wrong according to current societal practices. What is seen as wrong by one generation may be viewed differently by another. Standards, on the other hand, do not change over time. $2 + 2 = 4$ regardless of who is doing the math. The same standard applies to everyone.

God holds standards for us, and the standards do not change over time. What God viewed as sin in the days of Noah, he still sees as sin today. He does not allow flexibility or interpretation to change the nature of what is right or wrong. And at the end of our lives, we will all be judged according to the same standard. There is no opportunity to redefine what is acceptable and what is not. There will be no gray areas. It is clear and well defined what God expects from us.

Are you living according to God's standard, or are you following societal norms, or even deciding for yourself what is right and wrong? God's laws do not change, nor do they become obsolete. Study the Scripture and see for yourself.

Semper Fi in the Lord and I hope to see you in Church on Sunday.